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(71) Applicant: **N.V. Philips' Gloeilampenfabrieken**
Groenewoudseweg 1
NL-5621 BA Eindhoven(NL)

(72) Inventor: **Kasperkovitz, Wolfdietrich Georg**
c/o INT. OCTROOIBUREAU B.V. Prof. Holstlaan 6
NL-5656 AA Eindhoven(NL)

(72) Inventor: **Dullemond, Dirk Jan**
c/o INT. OCTROOIBUREAU B.V. Prof. Holstlaan 6
NL-5656 AA Eindhoven(NL)

(74) Representative: **Peters, Rudolf Johannes et al,**
INTERNATIONAAL OCTROOIBUREAU B.V. Prof.
Holstlaan 6
NL-5656 AA Eindhoven(NL)

(54) Current-source arrangement.

(57) A transconductance amplifier (3) comprises a differential amplifier (T_{11}, T_{12}), whose collector load is a current mirror (T_{13}, T_{14}, T_{15}, R_9, R_{10}) having a current output (8). A current-source transistor (T_{10}) arranged in the common emitter line supplies a current having a positive temperature-dependence. This current is obtained from a current-stabilising circuit (1). By means of a voltage divider (R_7, R_8) a fraction of a temperature-independent voltage is applied between the control electrodes of the differential amplifier (T_{11}, T_{12}), which voltage is taken from a voltage-stabilising circuit (2). Depending on the value of this fraction the output current on the output (8) is temperature-independent or has a negative temperature-dependence.

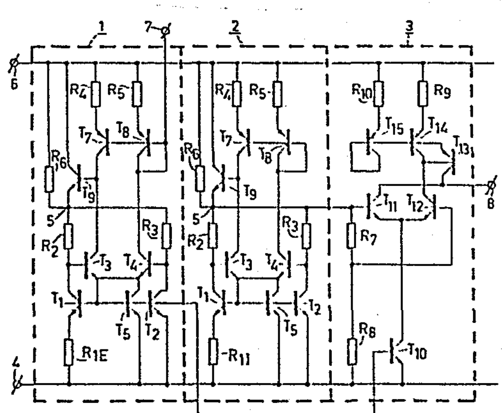

FIG.1

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"Current-source arrangement".

The invention relates to a current-source arrangement for generating a current which is substantially temperature-independent or has a negative temperature-dependence, which arrangement comprises a current-stabilising circuit for generating a current having a positive temperature-dependence.

Such a current-stabilising arrangement is disclosed in United States Patent Specification 3,914,683. The arrangement comprises two parallel circuits between a first and a second common terminal. The first circuit comprises a first resistor, a first transistor and a second resistor and the second circuit comprises a second transistor and a third resistor. The first and the second transistor have commonned control electrodes which are driven by a differential amplifier whose control electrodes are connected to a point between the first transistor and the second resistor and a point between the second transistor and the third resistor.

The output current of such a current stabiliser is proportional to the ratio between the absolute temperature and the resistance of the first resistor. In accordance with said United States Patent Specification this output current may be used for deriving a temperature-independent current or voltage or a current or voltage with a positive or a negative temperature-coefficient.

A current with a positive temperature dependence is required, for example, in an integrated FM receiver as described in the non-prepublished European Patent Application 83200281. In such a receiver low-pass filters are employed for tuning and for frequency-to-phase converters for <u>inter alia</u> demodulation. In order that it should operate correctly over a wide temperature range the receiver should meet stringent requirements. In order to minimize the effect of temperature variations it is necessary to employ temperature-compensated transconductance filters in the tuning section and, if delay elements are employed in the frequency-to-phase converters, temperature-compensated delay elements. Such delay elements are the subject of a Patent Application (PHN 10.629) filed simultaneously with the present Application.

A stabilised current which is directly proportional to the temperature of the integrated circuit is required for the temperature compensation of the transconductance filters. Such a current can be generated with the current-stabilising arrangement described in said United States Patent Specification, the first resistor being externally added to the integrated circuit so as to prevent the temperature dependence from being influenced.

Both a temperature-independent voltage and a temperature-independent current are needed for the temperature compensation of the delay elements. A temperature-independent voltage can be obtained by means of a fully integrated current stabiliser in accordance with said United States Patent Specification. However, the known current-stabilising arrangement can supply a temperature-independent current only if an external resistor is added to the integrated circuit.

The temperature compensation of both the transconductance filters and the delay elements then requires the use of two current-stabilising arrangements each with an externally added resistor and hence two connection pins on the integrated circuit. This entails additional costs and makes it more difficult to obtain an integrated FM receiver of the desired small dimensions.

Therefore, it is the object of the invention to provide a circuit arrangement for generating a temperature-independent current or a current with a negative temperature-dependence, which is based on a current-stabilising circuit supplying a current with a positive temperature-dependence, without the use of additional external elements and connection pins on the integrated circuit.

A current-source arrangement of the type set forth in the opening paragraph is characterized in that the arrangement further comprises a voltage-stabilising circuit for generating a temperature-independent voltage and an amplifier having a current output, which amplifier comprises two transistors arranged as a differential pair, a current having a positive temperature-dependence derived from the current stabiliser being applied to the common emitter connection of said transistors and at least a fraction of the output voltage of the voltage-stabilising circuit being applied between the bases of the two transistors.

The invention is based on recognition of the fact that it is possible to derive a temperature-independent current and a current having a negative temperature-dependence from a temperature-dependent current and a temperature-independent voltage by means of a differential amplifier. The temperature-dependent current then constitutes the tail current of the amplifier and a fraction of the temperature-independent voltage is applied to the control inputs of the amplifier. For comparatively low input voltages the output current is found to be substantially temperature-independent over a wide temperature range. For higher input voltages the output current has a negative temperature-dependence. The voltage stabiliser and the amplifier can be fully integrated without the addition of external components, so that the external resistor for the current stabiliser need be the only external component.

Since the temperature-independent input voltages of the amplifier must be comparatively small in order to obtain a satisfactory temperature-independence of the output current, the offset voltage of the amplifier should be small or be compensated for as far as possible. The influence of the offset voltage of the amplifier may be reduced by providing the two transistors of the amplifier with a plurality of emitters.

Alternatively or in addition the influence of the offset voltage may be reduced by arranging that the fraction of the output voltage of the voltage-stabilising circuit has such a magnitude that the output current of the amplifier has a negative temperature-dependence and that such a fraction of a current having a positive temperature-dependence, derived from the current-stabilising circuit, is added to said output current that the sum of said currents is substantially temperature-independent. Increasing the input voltage of the amplifier leads to an output current which decreases as a substantially linear function of the temperature. This temperature-dependence can be compensated for by a fraction of the output current of the current-stabilising circuit which current increases as a substantially linear function of the temperature.

The arrangement may be further characterized in that the current-stabilizing circuit and the voltage-stabilising circuit each comprise a first and a second parallel circuit between a first and a second common terminal, which first circuit comprises the series arrangement of a first resistor, the emitter-collector path of a first transistor and a second resistor in that order, which second circuit comprises the series arrangement of the emitter-collector path of a second transistor, whose control electrode is commonned with that of the first transistor, and a third resistor in that order, which second and third resistors are connected to the second common terminal which, by means of a third transistor arranged as an emitter follower, is driven by the output of a differential amplifier comprising a fourth and a fifth transistor which are arranged as a differential pair and whose control electrodes are connected to a point between the second resistor and the first transistor and to a point between the third resistor and the second transistor respectively, the common connection of the emitters of the fourth and the fifth transistor being coupled to the commonned control electrodes of the first and the second transistor. The voltage stabiliser is now of the same circuit design as the current stabiliser. The output current of the current stabiliser can be taken from, for example, the collector of a transistor whose base-emitter path is arranged in parallel with the base-emitter path of the first transistor. The output voltage of the voltage stabiliser can be taken from the second common terminal.

The invention will now be described in more detail, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which

Fig. 1 shows a first embodiment of the invention,

Fig. 2 shows the output current of the arrangement shown in Fig. 1 as a function of the temperature for different input voltages,

Fig. 3a shows a second embodiment of the invention, and

Fig. 3b shows a version of a current attenuator.

Fig. 1 shows a first current-source arrangement in accordance with the invention. Such an arrangement may for example form part of an integrated FM receiver, in which both a temperature-dependent and a temperature-independent current and a temperature-independent voltage are required. The arrangement comprises a current-stabilising circuit 1, a voltage-stabilising circuit 2 and an amplifier 3. The voltage stabiliser 2 is of the same circuit design as the current stabiliser 1. Identical parts of the current and voltage stabilisers bear the same reference numerals. The current-stabilising circuit 1 and the voltage-stabilising circuit 2 are each known per se from United States Patent Specification 3,914,683. The current-stabilising circuit 1 comprises two parallel circuits between a first common terminal 4, which is the negative power-supply terminal $-V_B$, and a second common terminal 5. The first circuit comprises a first resistor R_{1E}, the collector-emitter path of a first transistor T_1, and a second resistor R_2. The second circuit comprises a second transistor T_2 and a third resistor R_3. The base of transistor T_2 is connected to the base of transistor T_1. In the present embodiment the resistors R_2 and R_3 are identical so that equal currents will flow in both circuits. The emitter area of transistor T_1 must in such a case be larger than that of transistor T_2. In the present embodiment the emitter area of transistor T_1 is four times as large as that of transistor T_2. Instead of identical resistors R_2 and R_3 it is obvious that unequal resistors may be selected in order to achieve a current ratio different from unity in the two circuits of the current stabiliser. The current ratio can be defined accurately because accurate ratios between the values of the resistors R_2 and R_3 can be achieved when these resistors are integrated. Equal currents in both circuits are obtained by means of a differential amplifier. This amplifier comprises two transistors T_3, T_4, whose emitters are connected to the commoned control electrodes of the transistors T_1 and T_2 and , <u>via</u> a common transistor T_5 arranged as a diode, to the negative power-supply terminal 4. The emitter area of transistor T_5 is twice as large as that of transistor T_2. The control electrode of the transistor T_3 is connected to the collector of transistor T_1 and the control electrode of the transistor T_4 is connected to the collector of transistor T_2. In the present embodiment the collectors of the transistors T_3 and T_4 are loaded by a current mirror comprising two PNP transistors T_7 and T_8, transistor T_8 being arranged as a diode and the emitters of these transistors being connected to the positive power-supply terminal 6 <u>via</u> resistors R_4 and R_5. The output signal of the differential amplifier is taken from the collector of transistor T_7 and applied to the base of the emitter-follower transistor T_9, whose emitter is connected to the second common terminal 5 of the first and the second circuit. A resistor R_6 is arranged in parallel with the collector-emitter path of the transistor T_9, which resistor functions as a starting resistor for starting the current stabilising circuit.

As a result of the high gain of the differential amplifier the voltages on the bases of transistors T_3, T_4 and consequently the voltages across the resistors R_2 and

R_3 are equal, so that in the case of equal resistors R_3 and R_2 equal currents will flow in the first and the second circuit. Since the voltages on the bases of the transistors T_3 and T_4 are equal, the collector-base voltages of the transistors T_1 and T_2 are also equal, which last-mentioned voltages remain highly constant in the case of supply-voltage variations because the commonned control electrodes of the transistors T_1 and T_2 are coupled to the common-mode point of the differential amplifier T_3, T_4. As set forth in United States Patent Specification 3,914,683 the current in the two circuits in the case of equal resistors R_3, R_2 is $I = \frac{kT}{qR_{1E}} \ln n$, where k is Boltzmann's constant, T the absolute temperature, n the ratio between the emitter areas, and q the electron charge. It is obvious that if the current I must be directly proportional to the temperature of the integrated circuit, the resistor R_{1E} must be temperature-independent. Therefore, the resistor R_{1E} is added externally to the integrated circuit. A temperature-dependent output current can be taken from, for example, the collectors of transistors whose base-emitter paths are arranged in parallel with the base-emitter path of transistor T_1. This is the case for transistor T_{10}, which forms part of the amplifier 3. A temperature-dependent current can also be taken from the collector of transistor T_9, but in the present example this transistor is connected to the positive power-supply terminal 6. Alternatively, a temperature-dependent current may be taken from the collector of a transistor whose base-emitter path is arranged in parallel with the base-emitter path of transistor T_8. Since in the present example the emitter area of transistor T_5 is twice as large as that of transistor T_2 the stabilised current I will also flow in the collector circuits of the transistors T_3, T_4. If the circuit forms part of an integrated FM receiver the temperature-dependent currents may be applied to the transconductance filters employed for tuning.

The voltage stabiliser 2 is constructed in the same way as the stabiliser 1, except that in the first circuit the external resistor R_{1E} has been replaced by an integrated resistor R_{1I}. The voltage on the second common terminal 5 of the first and the second circuit depends on a voltage having a positive temperature-dependence, which is produced across a resistor (for example R_3 in the second circuit) by the current I having a positive temperature-dependence, and on two base-emitter voltages having a negative temperature-dependence (T_2 and T_4 in the second circuit). By a correct choice of the magnitude of the current I and the magnitudes of the resistors R_2 and R_3 a temperature-independent voltage of approximately 2 E_{gap} can be taken from the common terminal 5, E_{gap} being the band gap of the semiconductor material used. In this case the resistor R_{1I} may be integrated because the temperature-independent voltage is determined by R_2 and R_3.

The amplifier 3 comprises the transistors T_{11}, T_{12}, arranged as a differential pair, whose emitters are connected to the collector of transistor T_{10}. The base-emitter junction of transistor T_{10} is connected in parallel with the base-emitter junction of transistor T_2 of the current stabilising circuit 1, so that the collector current of transistor T_{10} has a positive temperature-dependence. The collectors of the transistors T_{11} and T_{12} are loaded by a current-mirror comprising the transistors T_{13}, T_{14} and T_{15}, the emitters of the transistors T_{14} and T_{15} being connected to the positive power-supply terminal 6 via identical resistors R_9 and R_{10}. The output current of the amplifier, which current is formed by the difference between the collector currents of the transistors T_{11} and T_{12}, is available on terminal 8, which is connected to the collector of transistor T_{13}. By means of a voltage divider comprising the integrated resistors R_7 and R_8 a fraction of the output voltage of the voltage stabiliser 2 is applied between the base-electrodes of transistors T_{11} and T_{12}. For comparatively small values of the input voltage V_{in} the output current I_{out} of the amplifier 3 is substantially independent of the temperature. The variations of the collector currents I_1 and I_2 of the transistors T_{11} and T_{12} respectively in the case of variations of the corresponding base-emitter voltages V_{BE1} and V_{BE2} are approximately:

$$\Delta I_1 = \frac{q}{kT} \cdot \frac{I}{2} \Delta V_{BE1} \text{ and } \Delta I_2 = \frac{q}{kT} \cdot \frac{I}{2} \Delta V_{BE2}$$

where I is the transistor T_{10} collector current having a positive temperature-dependence. It follows that when $V_{in} = \Delta V_{BE1} - \Delta V_{BE2}$ the output current $I_u = \Delta I_1 - \Delta I_2 = \frac{q}{kT} \cdot \frac{I}{2} V_{in}$. Since the voltage V_{in} is a fraction of the temperature-independent output voltage of the voltage-stabilising circuit 2 and the current I has a positive temperature-dependence, it will be appreciated that the output current I_u is substantially temperature-independent.

In Fig. 2 the relative output current I_u of the amplifier 3 is plotted as a function of the temperature T for different values of the input voltage $V_{in} = F \cdot E_{gap}$, the fraction F being determined by the ratio between the values of the resistors R_7 and R_8. The Figure shows that the current I_u exhibits a maximum variation of 0.6% in the temperature range from -20°C to +60°C for comparatively small values of F (F = 0.004; 0.008 and 0.012). For greater values of F (F = 0.02) the output current exhibits a negative temperature-dependence, which current may alternatively be taken from terminal 8. By a suitable choice of the ratio between the values of the resistors R_7 and R_8 a substantially temperature-independent current is available on the output terminal 8 of the amplifier 3. When the circuit is integrated in an integrated FM receiver this temperature-independent current may be applied to the delay elements used for demodulation.

For the values of F for which a substantially temperature-independent output current is obtained the input voltage of the amplifier is approximately 10 mV, which is not very high relative to the amplifier offset voltage, which is of the order of 1 mV for customary dimensions of the transistors T_{11} and T_{12}. In order to reduce the influence of this offset voltage the transistors T_{11} and T_{12} may be provided with a plurality of emitters, so that the emitter area of these transistors is increased and the offset voltage is reduced.

Another possibility of reducing the influence of the offset voltage will be explained with reference to Fig. 3a, which is a block diagram of a second current source arrangement in accordance with the invention. The circuit arrangement again comprises a current-stabilising circuit 1 which supplies a current having a positive temperature-dependence to the amplifier 3, and a voltage-stabilising circuit 2 which supplies a temperature-independent voltage to the amplifier 3 via an attenuation 10. The influence of the offset voltage is reduced by increasing the ratio between the input and the offset voltage by increasing the fraction F by means of the resistors R_7 and R_8 (see Fig. 1). By increasing the fraction F, for example F = 0.02 in the present embodiment, the output current of the amplifier 3 will have a negative temperature-dependence (see Fig. 2). By taking a current having a positive temperature-dependence from the current stabilising circuit 1 and adding a fraction of this current to the output current of the amplifier 3 via a current attenuator 20, a substantially temperature-independent current is obtained which is available on terminal 8.

Fig. 3b shows a version of the current attenuator 20. The base electrode of a transistor T_{21} is connected to the terminal 7 (see Fig. 1). The emitter of transistor T_{21} is connected to the power-supply terminal 6 via a resistor R_{22}. The resistor R_{22} has a resistance value equal to that of the resistor R_5, so that a current having a positive temperature-dependence flows in the collector line of the transistor T_{21}. This collector current is reflected by a current mirror comprising transistors T_{22} and T_{23}, of which transistor T_{22} is arranged as a diode, and the resistors R_{24} and R_{25}. The ratio between the emitter areas of the transistors T_{22} and T_{23} and the ratio between the values of the resistors R_{24} and R_{25} is n:1 the collector current of transistor T_{23} is therefore n times as small as the collector current of transistor T_{21}. The collector of transistor T_{23} may be connected to the output 8 of the amplifier 3.

The invention is not limited to the version described for the current and voltage stabilising circuit and the amplifier. In principle, any current and voltage stabiliser may be used which supplies a current having a positive temperature-dependence and a temperature-independent voltage. Moreover, any amplifier provided with a current output and having an input differential stage with a current source in the common emitter line may be used.

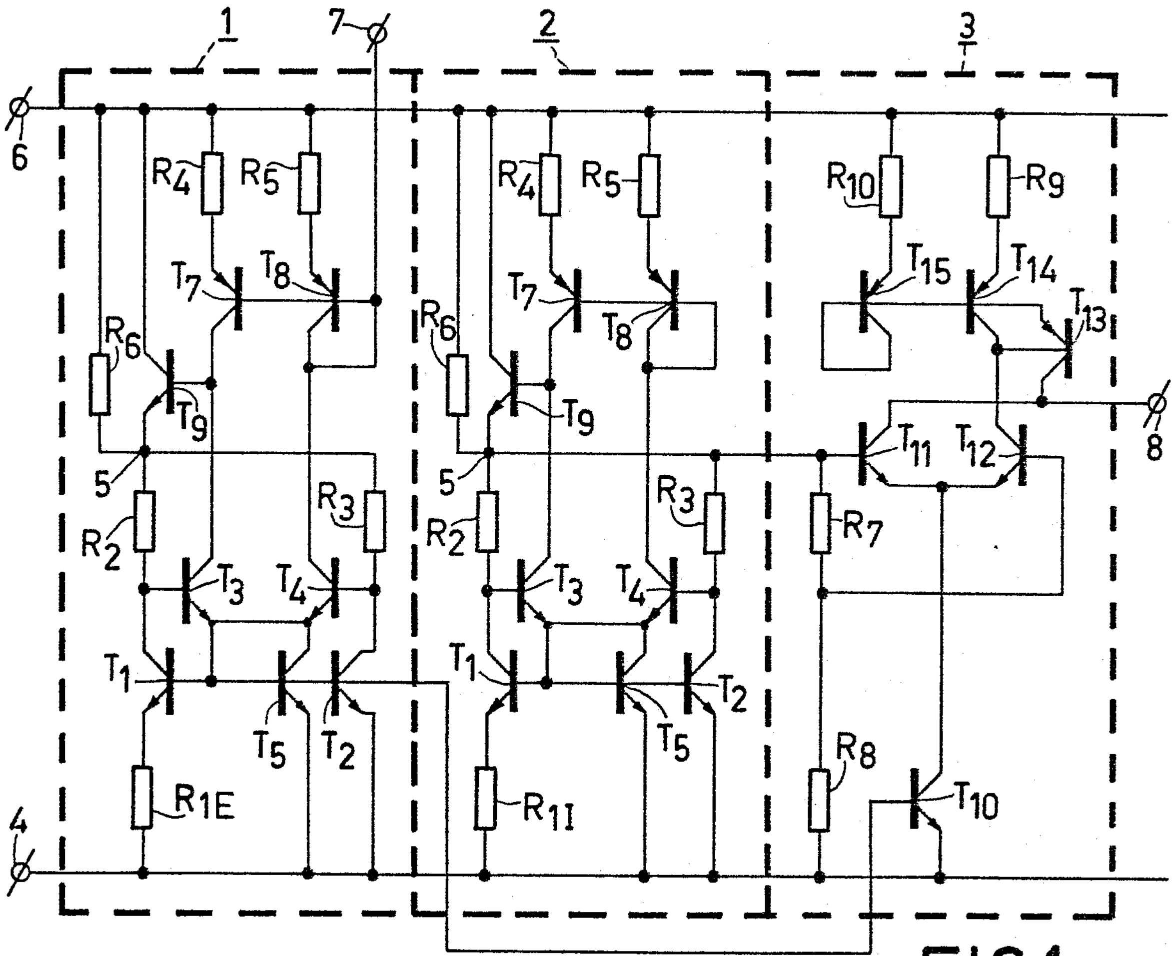
1. A current-source arrangement for generating a current which is substantially temperature-independent or has a negative temperature-dependence, which arrangement comprises a current-stabilising circuit for generating a current having a positive temperature-dependence, characterized in that the arrangement further comprises a voltage-stabilising circuit for generating a temperature-independent voltage and an amplifier having a current output, which amplifier comprises two transistors arranged as a differential pair, a current having a positive temperature-dependence derived from the current stabiliser being applied to the common emitter connection of said transistors and at least a fraction of the output voltage of the voltage-stabilising circuit being applied between the bases of the two transistors.

2. A current-source arrangement as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the two transistors of the amplifier are provided with a plurality of emitters.

3. A current-source arrangement as claimed in Claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the fraction of the output voltage of the voltage-stabilising circuit has such a magnitude that the output current of the amplifier has a negative temperature-dependence and such a fraction of a current having a positive temperature-dependence, derived from the current-stabilising circuit, is added to said output current that the sum of said currents is substantially temperature-independent.

4. A current source arrangement as claimed in Claim 1, 2 or 3, characterized in that the current-stabilising circuit and the voltage-stabilising circuit each comprise a first and a second parallel circuit between a first and a second common terminal, which first circuit comprises the series arrangement of a first resistor, the emitter

collector path of a first transistor and a second resistor in that order, which second circuit comprises the series arrangement of the emitter-collector path of a second transistor, whose control electrode is commonned with that of the first transistor, and a third resistor in that order, which second and third resistors are connected to the second common terminal which, by means of a third transistor arranged as an emitter follower, is driven by the output of a differential amplifier comprising a fourth and a fifth transistor which are arranged as a differential pair and whose control electrodes are connected to a point between the second resistor and the first transistor and to a point between the third resistor and the second transistor respectively, the common connection of the emitters of the fourth and the fifth transistor being coupled to the commonned control electrodes of the first and the second transistor.



1
2
3
7
6
4
5
8
R4
R5
R6
R2
R3
R1E
R11
R10
R9
R7
R8
T1
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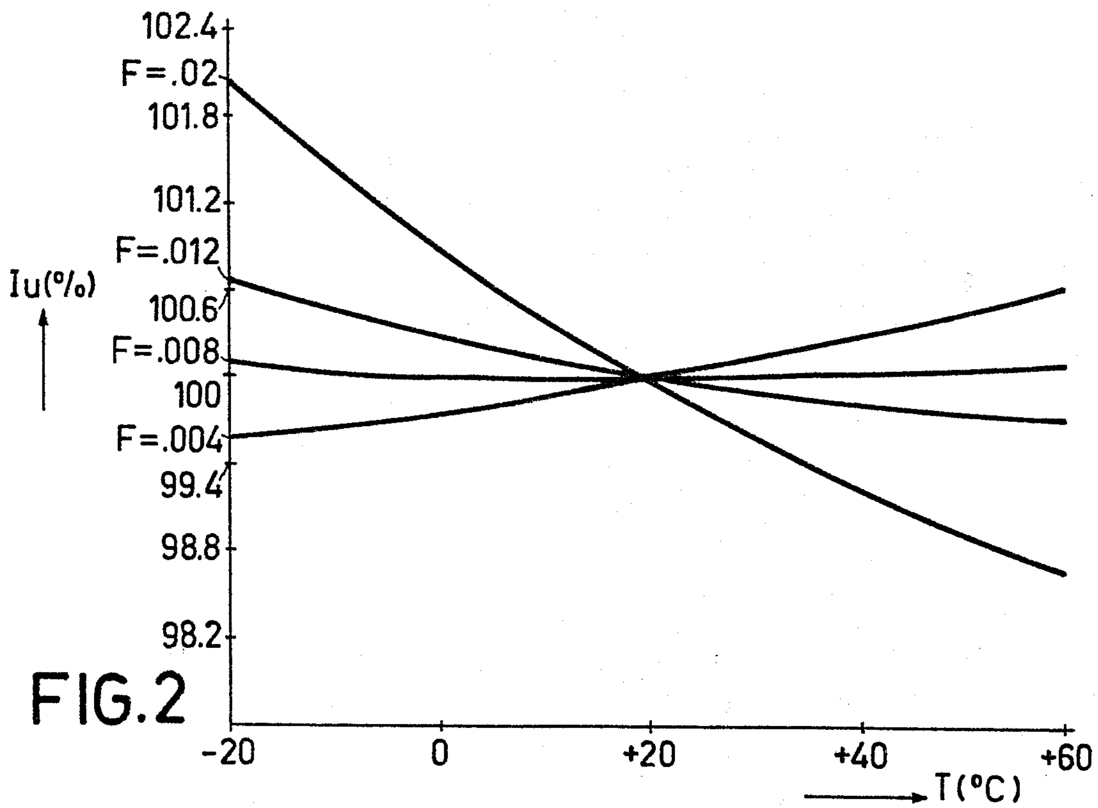
T13
T14
T15

FIG.1



102.4
F=.02
101.8
101.2
F=.012
100.6
F=.008
100
F=.004
99.4
98.8
98.2
Iu(%)
-20
0
+20
+40
+60
T(°C)

FIG.2

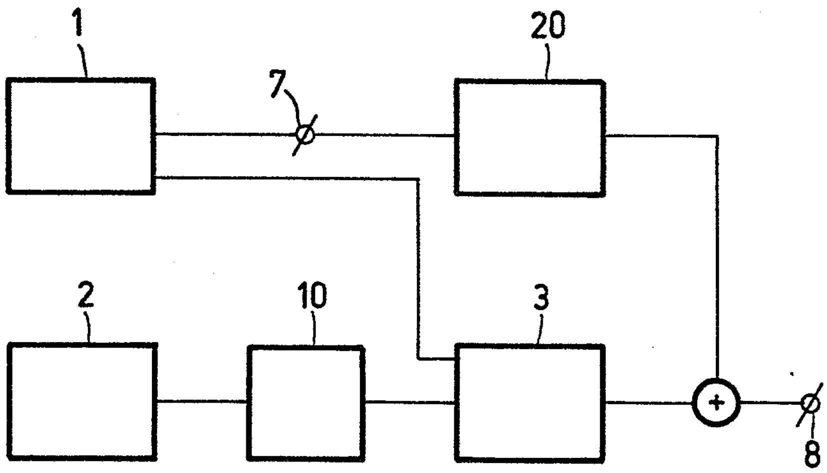


FIG.3a

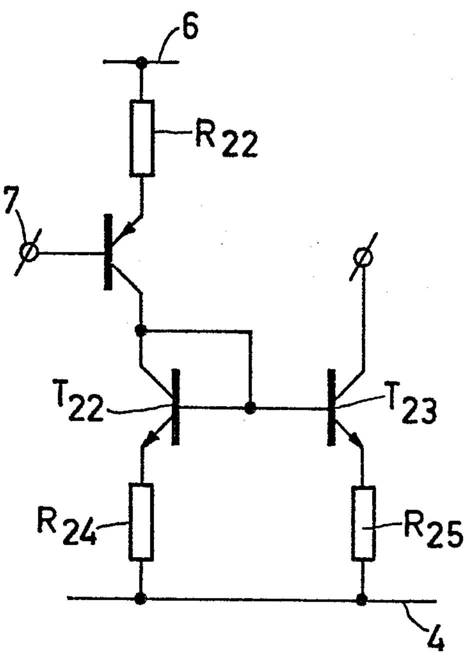


FIG.3b

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

0124918
Application number

EP 84 20 0424

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 3)
A	IEEE JOURNAL OF SOLID-STATE CIRCUITS, vol. SC-17, no. 6, December 1982, pages 1139-1143, New York, USA; G.C.M. MEIJER et al.: "A new curvature-corrected bandgap reference" * Figure 5; page 1141, paragraph: "Realization and measurement results" * ---	1	G 05 F 3/20
A	GB-A-2 096 803 (FAIRCHILD) * Page 2, lines 6-82; figure 2 * ---	1	
A	US-A-4 088 941 (RCA) * Column 1, line 65 - column 5, line 57; figure 1 * ---	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 3)
A	US-A-4 277 739 (NATIONAL) * Abstract; figure 1 * ---	1	G 05 F 1/00 G 05 F 3/00
A	FR-A-2 222 691 (PHILIPS) * Figures 4,6 * ---	4	
A	US-A-4 325 018 (RCA) * Abstract; figure 4 * -----	1	

The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE	12-07-1984	ZAEGEL B.C.

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

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